

**THE FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING PRESENTS
CAREGIVER'S CORNER ONLINE
MAY 2006**

"Caregiver's Corner Online" is an electronic newsletter produced by the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (AAA) with funding from the National Family Caregiver Support Program of the Older Americans Act. Our goal is to send you information to support you as a family caregiver for an older adult.

IN THIS EDITION:

1. May is Older Americans Month
2. Help Protect Seniors from
Con Artists
3. Sight and Sound Tech Quest, May 19
4. Grandparent Support Groups
Continue Through Summer
5. 2nd Annual Health and Information
Fair at Falls Church Senior Center
6. "Active for Life"- Herndon Senior Center
7. Fairfax County Honors Direct Care Workers
8. Previous Editions of "Caregiver's Corner
Online" Newsletter

1. MAY IS OLDER AMERICANS MONTH. On May 1, 2006, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors declared May as Older Americans Month in Fairfax County. The county is home to more than 88,000 residents age 65 and older. Seniors are the fastest-growing segment of our population making it important to ensure that we have an aging-friendly community, which provides supportive options for independent and active seniors. The national theme for this year's Older Americans Month is "Choices for Independence." Whether you are an older person and/or a caregiver for one, there is a wealth of information in this edition of "Caregiver's Corner Online," related to health, safety, and special events going on in the community in May and June. We hope you will find something of interest.

2. SENIORS LOSE WHEN THEY THINK THEY'VE WON--HELP PROTECT THE SENIOR IN YOUR LIFE FROM CON ARTISTS. Every day someone calls the financial crimes unit of the Fairfax County Police Department to complain about being the victim of a lottery scam. The elderly are particularly vulnerable to unscrupulous callers who tell them they've won the lottery, but need to provide money for the taxes and registration fees. This is called "advance fee fraud." One victim called his son excitedly to come over to the house right away because his

**THE FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING PRESENTS
CAREGIVER'S CORNER ONLINE
MAY 2006**

million dollar lottery winnings were about to be delivered. Of course, the winnings were never delivered and he was out thousands of dollars. Unfortunately, this is rarely a crime that results in arrest. Most often the scam artists are calling from out of the country, and they use "drop" cell phones that are disposed of as soon as they collect the money or financial information they sought from the victim. Not only are there few leads for detectives to follow, but these crimes are being perpetrated outside the victim's jurisdiction. The best method for combating these scams is not to be a victim of them; and if you have an elderly parent or friend, keep these tips in mind:

- Talk to your parents about advance fee fraud, and ask them to tell you if they get any unusual calls saying they have won money or other items that require an upfront fee to collect.
- Remind parents that there are many unscrupulous people around, and that some etiquette lessons they may have learned when young about being polite will not apply when on the phone with strangers, even friendly, persuasive and "nice" sounding people.
- Tell parents it's okay to hang-up on people they don't know who call them; practice it with them.
- Persuade parents to limit the amount of credit that is available on credit cards or in bank accounts in case someone gets access to their account numbers.
- Ask parents not to wire money or send money to anyone without talking with you first.
- Most of these scams are conducted by phone, but scams can also come by mail or on the Internet, so discuss each possibility with your parents.

To avoid being a victim of advance fee con artists, and to keep loved ones safe, keep this principle in mind and share it with others: True lottery winners do NOT have to pay any fees in advance; legitimate lottery operators deduct any necessary taxes from the payout. The same applies to other "free" gifts or awards. If the "giver" requires money in advance, it's not legitimate. (Source: Fairfax County Police Department, Public Information Office; 703-246-2253, TTY 703-204-2264; e-mail FCPD-PIO@fairfaxcounty.gov.)

3. SIGHT AND SOUND TECH QUEST, MAY 19. The Fairfax County Public Library invites people with sight, hearing or other disabilities, and caregivers, to the Sight and Sound Tech Quest on May 19 from 10:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. This free event takes place in the Fairfax County Government Center located at 12000 Government Center Parkway in Fairfax.

The event is sponsored by the Library's Access Services branch (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/as), which makes library services accessible to people with disabilities. For details please call 703-324-8380; TTY 703-324-8365. The Sight and Sound Tech Quest will feature presentations by industry experts, as well as assistive equipment demonstrations and light refreshments. One of the four presenters is Frank Kurt Cylke, the internationally renowned director of the National Library Service for the Blind and the Physically Handicapped. Other presentations will be given by Eddie Timanus, a "USA Today" sports writer and former "Jeopardy" winner who is blind; Dr. Joey Wallace, director of the Virginia Assistive Technology Loan Financing Authority of the Virginia Assistive Technology System; and Dr. Suleiman Alibhai, a low-vision specialist who heads Inova Health System's Hazel E.R. Widner Low Vision Center. For more information, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/sightandsound.htm.

**THE FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING PRESENTS
CAREGIVER'S CORNER ONLINE
MAY 2006**

4. GRANDPARENT SUPPORT GROUPS CONTINUE THROUGH SUMMER. If you or someone you know provides custodial care for minor relatives, the kinship care support groups are a way to touch base with other such caregivers. Sponsored by the Fairfax County Department of Family Services and Fairfax County Public Schools, Family Services and Involvement Section, groups are meeting as follows:

--Bryant Alternative High School, 2709 Popkins Lane, Alexandria;
One Thursday per month in June, July, and August.

--Pennino Human Services Building, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax;
Two Tuesdays per month in June, July, and August.

Childcare is provided for those who are pre-registered. For details, please call Robin Hamby at 703-277-2640 or Colleen Turner at 703-324-5489; TTY: 703-449-1186.

5. 2ND ANNUAL HEALTH AND INFORMATION FAIR AT FALLS CHURCH SENIOR CENTER. On Tuesday, May 23, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon, in the Falls Church Community Center, 223 Little Falls Street, Falls Church. A two mile Fun Run will kick off the event at 9:00 a.m. There will be vendors with information on healthy lifestyles. There will be snacks and a raffle each hour (must be present to win). For additional information, please contact Tracy Browand at 703-258-5020 or e-mail tbrowand@fallschurchva.gov.

6. "ACTIVE FOR LIFE" PROGRAM OFFERED AT HERNDON SENIOR CENTER. Find ways of moving more and eating in a healthier way. The nationally recognized "Active for Life" program is being offered free of charge at the Herndon Senior Center on Wednesdays from 1:00-2:00 p.m., June 7 through August 30. Prescreening by phone is required in advance. For more information and to see if you qualify, please call the Active for Life Center at 703-807-5855.

7. FAIRFAX COUNTY HONORS DIRECT CARE WORKERS. Mrs. Park, a direct support worker at Sunrise Senior Living, stated: "We love our jobs. They train us well, but caring comes from the heart." "Professional means a commitment to a career of caring and dedication of purpose," exclaimed another. These direct support workers are among the eighty-seven percent of Direct Care Workers surveyed who expressed their satisfaction with taking care of our long-term care families.

Who are these direct care workers? They are men and women who provide personal care, comfort, and companionship in our residential homes, nursing homes, home health agencies, group homes, adult day care centers, assisted living facilities, and in an individual's own home.

The term "direct care worker" refers to a wide range of occupations including nursing assistants and aides, personal care and home health aides, residential counselors and program assistants and assistants, companions, sitters, certified medication technicians, homemakers and many others who provide daily, hands-on care to seniors and adults with disabilities in various settings. Direct care workers form the centerpiece of the formal long term care system for many of our families in the Fairfax community.

**THE FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING PRESENTS
CAREGIVER'S CORNER ONLINE
MAY 2006**

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor, marketplace competition with other comparable occupations makes it difficult to recruit and retain new direct care worker employees in our community. Low wages, lack of health insurance, risk of injury, lack of professional respect, and transportation issues are major barriers that accentuate the difficulty for them to be employed in this profession, despite enjoying the work.

Recruitment and retention of direct care workers will be compounded as the baby boomer generation ages. Studies report that the need for direct care workers is expected to increase over 40% through 2012. These facts emphasize an immediate and future shortage of front-line workers making it critical that our community recognizes the contribution these service champions provide to our region.

In order to bring recognition to these valued professionals, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is proclaiming June 9 through June 16, 2006 as "Direct Care Workers Week." The third annual Proclamation Reception & Ceremony will be held on Monday, June 5, at 9:00 a.m. in the Government Center in Fairfax. Members of the Long Term Care Coordinating Council and direct care workers from throughout Fairfax County are expected to attend. Keynote speaker Patty Harris, Executive Director of Direct Care Alliance, stated, "I would imagine that if we understood more deeply the incredible task direct care workers undertake daily to ensure the delivery of quality services for our loved ones, the celebration of the men and women who do this work would go well beyond the walls of the long term care system." (The Long Term Care Coordinating Council (LTCCC), www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/ltccc, focuses its work to enhance and support the long term care community.)

8. PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF "CAREGIVER'S CORNER ONLINE" NEWSLETTER. Current and past editions of the "Caregiver's Corner Online" newsletter are available online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa/caregivers_corner_nl.htm.

Please note that these items are included for informational purposes only and do not imply endorsement by the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging or Fairfax County Government.

For further information, please contact an Aging Information Specialist at the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (telephone: 703-324-7948; TTY 703-449-1186 or e-mail: fairfax_aaa@fairfaxcounty.gov). Visit our Web site at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa/.
